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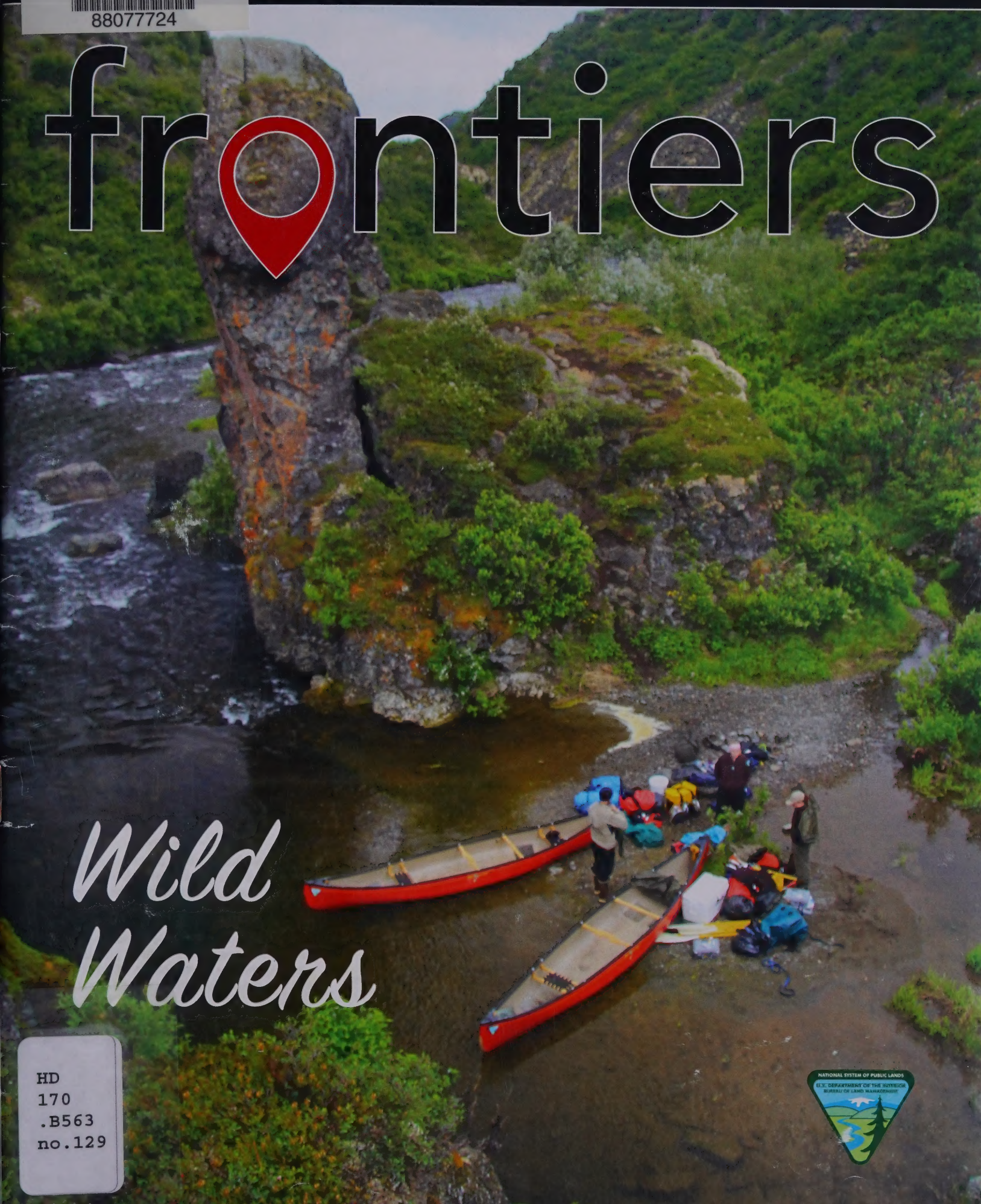
ISSUE 129 | SUMMER 2018

frontiers



Wild Waters

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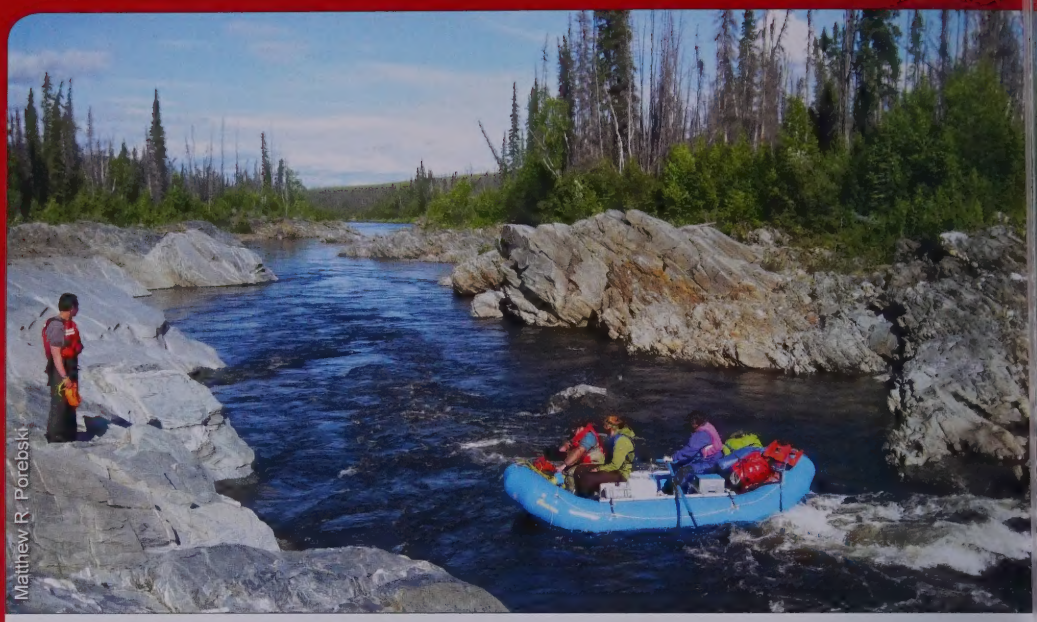


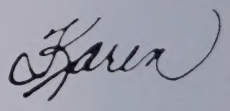
Matthew R. Porebski

Welcome to *frontiers*!

Our Wild Waters issue is celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. We worked to fill this issue with tips and information you can use as you visit BLM Alaska-managed Wild and Scenic Rivers this summer. We manage six – Fortymile, Delta, Gulkana, Beaver Creek WSR, Birth Creek, and Unalakleet. We also have other stories from around the state.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Karen J. Laubenstein
Editor



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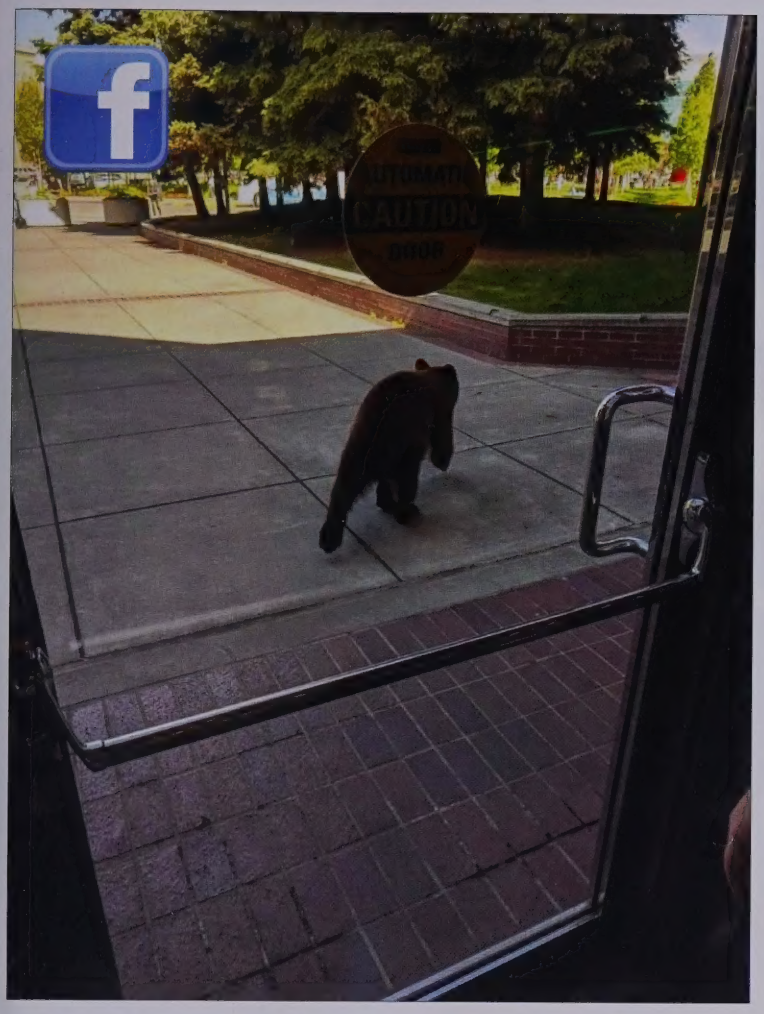

Wednesdays are usually themed "Wild Wednesdays" on our BLM Alaska Social Media Channels. Wednesday, June 13, did not disappoint! A small black bear stopped by early in the morning at the Anchorage Federal Building where the BLM Alaska State Office and Public Information Center (Public Room) are located. It provided a timely reminder to all of our Facebook followers that Alaska is bear country, even in our urban most areas. This particular bear made the rounds that day and was spotted in several areas of downtown Anchorage.

More bear safety info at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Living with Bears Safety website.

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rules to play by

Let's Ride!

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Summer is here. Before you head out to your public lands for some off-roading fun, here are few things to remember …

When to Go

Check trail conditions with BLM Field Offices. Wait for dry conditions with firmer trails.

Some Places to Go

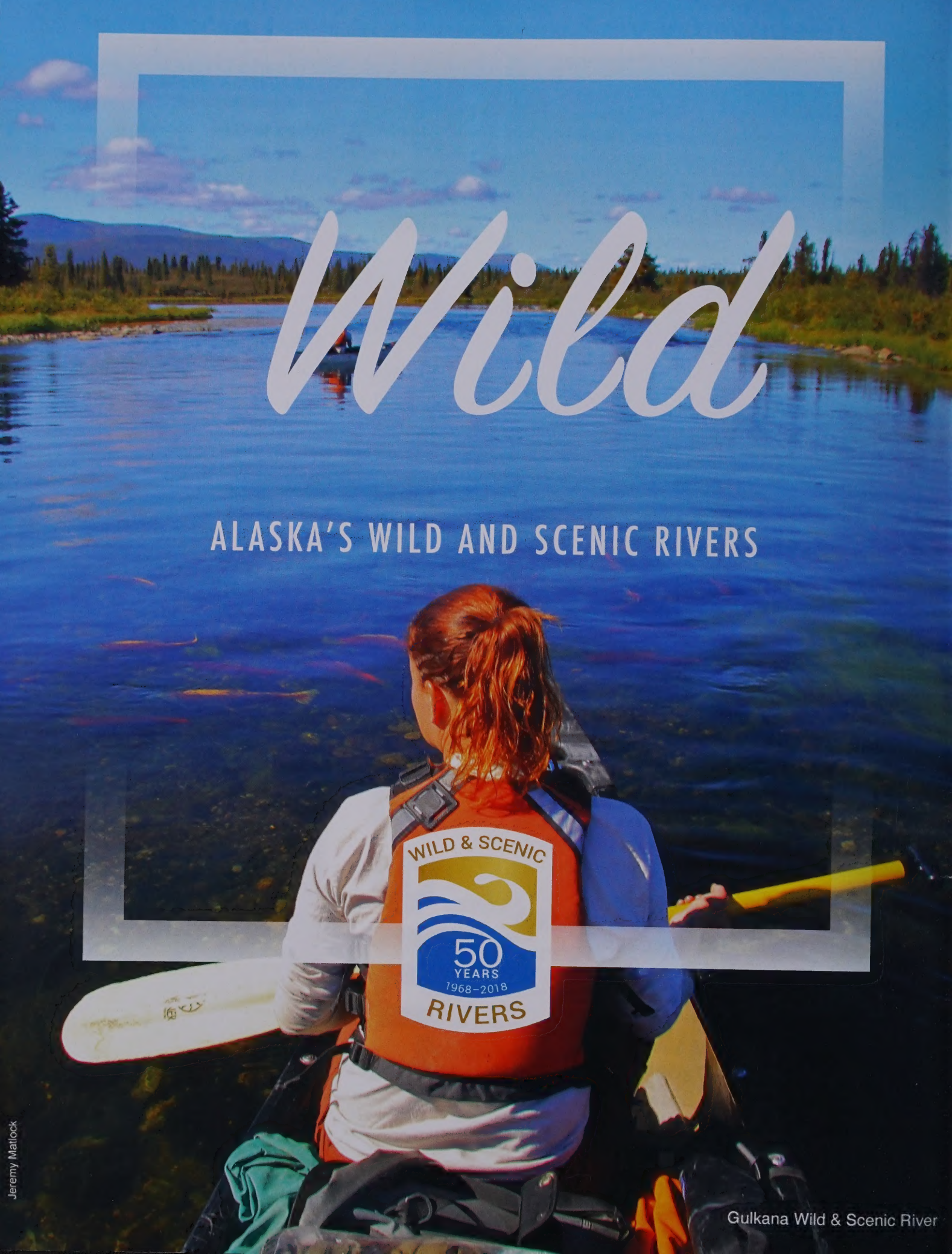
- Tangle Lakes Archaeological District
- White Mountains National Recreation Area
- Steese National Conservation Area
- Fortymile Area

Safety Tips and Rules

- Check the ATV weight limit for the trails before you go, yours might be too heavy. In some areas, larger UTVs may be limited to designated routes.
- Always wear a helmet.
- Bring a map of the area.
- Carry survival supplies.
- Be cautious of and courteous to other trail users.
- Do not disturb, damage or remove natural materials, signs or facilities.
- Cross creeks and rivers at designated crossings.
- Pack out what you pack in.
- Only operate vehicles on designated trails, at a safe speed.
- Carry the appropriate number of passengers that your ATV is designed for.
- Be safe! Drive responsibly.

Craig McCaa

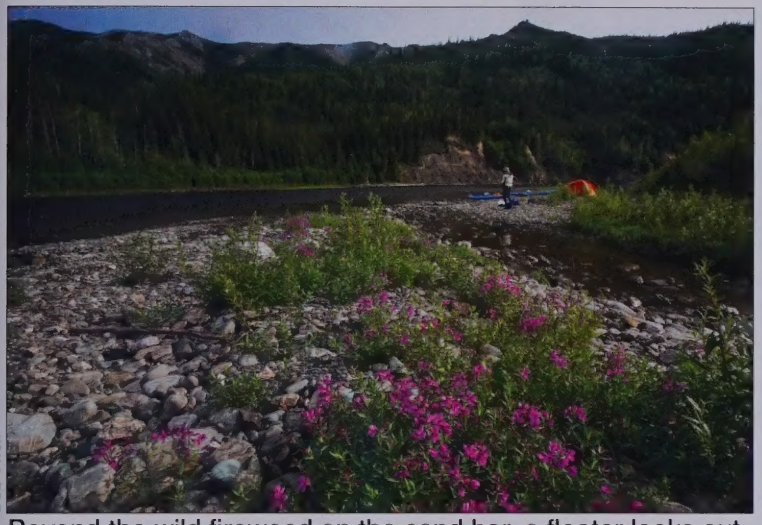
Limited Use Area in the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River Corridor.


Wild
ALASKA'S WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS
WILD & SCENIC
50
YEARS
1968–2018
RIVERS
Jeremy Matlock
Gulkana Wild & Scenic River

Have you ever ached for a scenic escape into the wilds of Alaska? As the nation commemorates the 50th anniversary of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act this year, BLM Alaska is celebrating its six designated "Wild and Scenic Rivers" – the Beaver Creek, Birch Creek, Delta, Fortymile, Gulkana, and Unalakleet rivers. The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, or ANILCA, designated these rivers as Wild and Scenic on Dec. 2, 1980, adding them to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Some activities like hunting, fishing, and trapping require federal or state permits or a license.

The more you learn about these rivers, the more they call to you to come and experience them.

Beaver Creek Wild and Scenic River



Beyond the wild fireweed on the sand bar, a floater looks out at Beaver Creek Wild and Scenic River.

With its headwaters in the White Mountains about 50 miles north of Fairbanks, this river flows west past the mountain's stunning jagged limestone ridges and then flows north and east through the Yukon Flats until it empties into the mighty Yukon River. The first 127 miles of Beaver Creek is mostly within the BLM-managed White Mountains National Recreation Area, and the last 16 designated miles are within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service-managed Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge. Boasting the 'longest road-to-road float trip in North America,' Beaver Creek is a popular spot for river adventurers. Its clear waters, modest rapids, and unforgettable scenery make a relaxing trip. It can take seven days to three weeks to float. You can arrange for an air taxi to pick you up on a gravel bar near Victoria Creek for the shorter float trip. The longer 360 river-miles trip will go to the Yukon River with take-out at the bridge on the Dalton Highway.

Beaver Creek fisheries consist mostly of Arctic grayling, with the lower river reaches featuring Northern pike, sheefish and whitefish. The White Mountains' ridges are home to Dall sheep and endangered peregrine falcons. In the valley, you may find moose, black and grizzly bears, wolves, and caribou; furbearers including lynxes, beavers, martens, wolverines, muskrats, or foxes. Overhead, you may see eagles, peregrine falcons, or owls. Migratory waterfowl include merganser, shovelhead, goldeneye and harlequin ducks – many spending summers along Beaver Creek, while others migrate on. The valley bottoms usually consist of permafrost (permanently frozen soil) about a foot beneath the surface. Forests are short-stunted black spruce, deep sedge tussocks, and thick stands of willow. Creekside gravel soils support tall white spruce trees and dense brush.

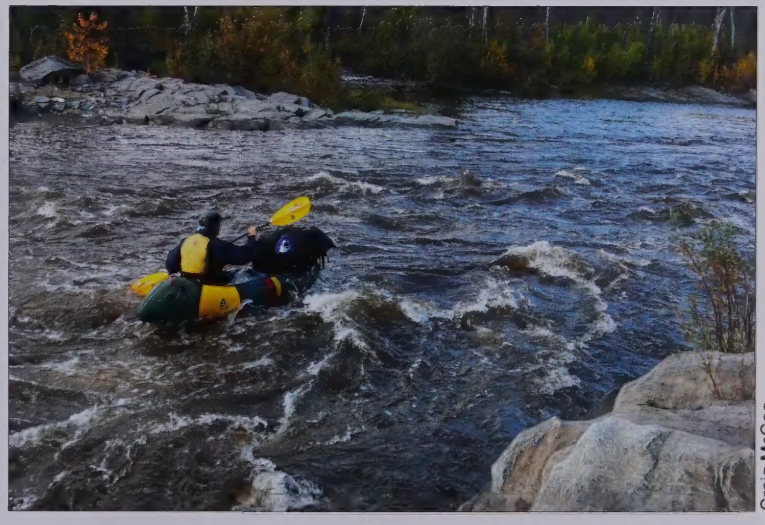
The area is important for caribou calving and summering/wintering areas.

Birch Creek Wild and Scenic River

This river flows from the windswept ridges and alpine tundra of the Steese National Conservation Area into the broad expanse of the Yukon Flats in central Alaska and eventually flows into the Yukon River. For almost its entire length of 344 river miles (126 designated river miles), there are few signs of other people, with the exception of several log cabins.

Visited primarily in summer, Birch Creek provides an exceptional floating experience, as only a few places in Alaska offer such a primitive segment of river accessible by road. While canoeing is the most popular recreational activity, you can hunt, fish, trap, hike, rock hound, or study nature. You can also experience primitive camping and photography.

Winter activities may include dog mushing, trapping and cross-country skiing. Each February, Birch Creek is on the route of the Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race between Fairbanks and Whitehorse, and snowmachining along the creek is popular in late winter and early spring.



Craig McCaa

A packrafter on the rapids of the Birch Creek Wild and Scenic River.

Wild & Hot

Building a Safe Campfire

Everyone loves a campfire when enjoying Alaska's great outdoors. Once started, campfires can be difficult to extinguish. Pouring water on your campfire may not be enough. Roots and other organic matter may still be burning a foot or more underneath the surface, especially in tundra and alpine areas.

Here are a few tips for building a safe campfire this summer.

- **Clear a spot to build your campfire where it can't spread (every year, campfires cause wildland fires across Alaska).**
- **Select a site without overhanging branches, ground debris, or adjacent shrubs.**
- **Use a "fire pan" or "fire ring."**
- **Keep water nearby in case the fire begins to spread.**
- **Never leave your campfire unattended.**

To safely extinguish a campfire:

- **Dig all material with a shovel down to permafrost or mineral soil.**
- **Pour large amounts of water or soil on the fire and embers, stirring with a stick or shovel until the area is cool to the touch.**
- **Double-check for remaining heat, especially around the edge of the campfire.**

For current fire information, visit http://fire.ak.blm.gov.

Kim Mincer

Rafter checking to make sure fire is out and coals are cold.

Delta Wild and Scenic River

Matthew Vos

Fisherwoman catches Arctic Grayling at Tangle Lakes in the Delta Wild and Scenic River Corridor.

The Delta River watershed extends from the Upper Tangle Lakes downstream to Black Rapids and 62 of its river miles are designated wild and scenic. Unlike other rivers on the southern side of the Alaska Range, the Delta River flows north through the dominantly rugged and glacial peaked (6,000-9,000 feet) Alaska Range to join the Tanana River and, eventually, the Yukon River. Few rivers anywhere in the world can match the quality and quantity of Arctic grayling fisheries in the Delta River. High-quality lake trout fishing is available in late winter and early spring. Tangle Lakes and the Delta River also support round whitefish, lake trout, burbot, and longnose suckers.

The Delta is one of the few easily accessible Wild and Scenic Rivers in Alaska. It provides both day use and overnight backcountry excursions. Activities include wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, trapping, camping, hiking, snowmachining, skiing, berry-picking, and photography. Explore boating opportunities for both lake and river paddling, on clear and glacial water stretches and even some challenging whitewater. The corridor is flanked by the low, rolling tundra hills of the Amphitheatre Mountains and the high, rugged, snow-covered peaks and ridges of the Alaska Range, offering high-quality scenic vistas. The river and surrounding hills provide undisturbed views of the river canyon, waterfalls, channelized riverbeds, tributaries, granite rock outcroppings, and examples of glacial alluvial processes.

More than 100 species of migrating birds and waterfowl use the river corridor and surrounding lakes as nesting areas. The trumpeter swan, a BLM-sensitive species, often inhabits the wetlands of Upper Tangle Lakes. Grizzly bears frequent the lowlands to fish and hunt where moose spend the summer and drop their calves. Tens of thousands of Nelchina caribou travel through this area during their annual migration to and from their calving grounds.

Fortymile Wild and Scenic River

About 392 miles of the Fortymile are designated wild and scenic. The Fortymile River is a clear water stream whose six main forks and their tributaries flow out of the Yukon-Tanana Uploads east of the Mertie Mountains and north of the Tanana State Forest. It is a major tributary of the Yukon River.

The Fortymile River has the site of Alaska's first major gold rush in 1886, the mining history visible in cabins and mine workings along the stream. Gold prospectors named the Fortymile River because it joins the Yukon River about 40 miles below Fort Reliance, an old Canadian trading post. Road-accessible boat launch sites and bush airstrips in the upper reaches of the Fortymile River area allow float trips varying from one day to two weeks. The main Fortymile River offers a great way to see the differing landscapes of Alaska's interior on a two-day float. Threading through this rugged landscape is the twisting, picturesque Taylor Highway leading motorists into the heart of the Fortymile River and over American Summit to the historic town of Eagle on the Yukon River.

Alpine tundra, tussocks, and boreal forests are among the many different types of plant communities along the Fortymile River. Hillside and valley floors are home to white spruce, birch, willow and aspen. Blueberry and cranberry bushes provide vivid fall colors and berry bounty. The Fortymile River is home to Arctic grayling, round whitefish, and burbot. The river corridor provides habitat for caribou, moose, Dall sheep, grizzly and black bears, furbearers, small game, raptors, peregrine falcon, waterfowl, owls, and numerous species of small mammals and birds.

Placer miner waving from the Fortymile Wild and Scenic River.

Wild & Cold ... Brrrrrrr

Alaska's COLD WATERS

Summer water temperatures for most of the rivers in Alaska is usually less than 50° F. For most people, when water temperatures are below 77° F. (25° C.), their breathing becomes affected. At 40° F. (4.4° C.), water is so painfully cold that your skin feels like it is burning. Most Alaska boating fatalities result from drowning in cold water while not wearing a life jacket. Most events happen quickly. A life jacket/life preserver can be the single most important factor in surviving cold water immersion.

Capsizing or falling into cold Alaska waterways cause drowning by:

1. Cold Shock Response. Gasping, hyperventilation and panic
2. Swim Failure. Within the first 30 minutes, rapid cooling of arms and legs makes it difficult to keep your head above water, effects occur regardless of swimming ability.
3. Immersion Hypothermia. After at least 30 minutes in the cold water, gradual cooling of the body's core temperature results in loss of useful consciousness.

Most capsizes happen by:

- Overloading
- Shifting or poorly secured loads
- Rough water
- Power or steerage loss
- Anchoring the boat's back (stern)
- A line wraps around the drive unit
- A wave hits after a sudden stop

Falls happen when:

- Slipping or losing balance or reaching for objects in the water.
- Drifting boat or materials – many people try to swim for them.

Checklist to stay safe around Alaska's cold waters.

✓File a float plan; include info about your watercraft, passengers, destination, route, expected return, and when and whom to call if you're overdue.

✓Ensure you can easily board your boat/raft from the water (reboarding ladder, rope ladder, foot sling, swim platform, or similar feature).

✓Conduct a safety check with your passengers: point out safety equipment, how to start/steer/stop the boat/raft, use the radio and emergency channel(s), and your float plan.

✓Be prepared; always wear a life jacket/life preserver when in an open boat or deck. Putting a life jacket on in the water is extremely difficult.

✓Carry a sound-producing device, such as a whistle.

✓Bring a signaling device such as mirror, small flares, or personal locator beacon.

✓Put your communication device (cell phone, radio, etc.) in a waterproof bag.

✓Bring a survival kit: knife, waterproof matches, emergency blanket, resealable plastic bag for water collection.

Gulkana Wild and Scenic River

The Gulkana River is one of the most popular sportfishing rivers in Alaska, providing rich habitat for rainbow trout, Arctic grayling, king (Chinook) salmon, red (sockeye) salmon, whitefish, longnose suckers, and lamprey. It is the leading king and red salmon-spawning stream in the Copper River basin. Grayling, rainbow trout, and steelhead are resident species.

The Gulkana River provides road accessibility, yet also remote and primitive experiences, especially on its West Fork. While the three forks are not considered whitewater rivers for most of their length, they include rapids rated up to Class IV. The corridor provides a remote setting for recreation and subsistence activities, such as boating. Closely flanked by low, rolling hills, with the Wrangell Mountains and Alaska Range in the background, the Gulkana offers high-quality scenic vistas.

Whether you boat, fish, hunt, trap, camp, hike, snowmachine, ski, dogsled, wildlife view, or take photos, the 2,140 square miles of the Gulkana River watershed has a place for you. Don't hesitate to stop by the Glennallen Field Office to get a copy of the *Gulkana Floater's Guide* or other resources. Visit the Gulkana Wild and Scenic River Recreation page.

Bob Wick

Taking a time out to fish during a float trip on the Gulkana Wild and Scenic River.

Unalakleet Wild and Scenic River

River floaters should always be on the lookout for hazards, as this fallen log on the Unalakleet Wild and Scenic River shows.

"Unalakleet" is Inupiaq for "place where the east wind blows," named by a people who have lived in the area for centuries. You can only reach the Unalakleet River by bush plane; it is one of the most remote Wild and Scenic Rivers managed by the BLM in Alaska. The clear, smooth waters of the Unalakleet River originate in the low and rolling Tulato Hills, which divide rainfall and snowmelt between Norton Sound and the Yukon River Basin. Old Woman Mountain is the most dominant feature along this river for five to six miles above and below the confluence with the Old Woman River.

The river starts out channelized and running swiftly. Downstream of the designated wild and scenic section, the Unalakleet River meanders across the arctic tundra 10 miles to the seaside village of Unalakleet on Norton Sound. The Unalakleet River produces King (Chinook), red (sockeye), pink (humpies), and dog (chum) salmon, all of which spawn in the river. These fisheries are important for both subsistence and sportfishing businesses.

For more information, visit our Recreation Activity webpage, or the Alaska National Conservation Lands web page.

— Karen Laubenstein
Writer-Editor
Alaska State Office

Jeremy Matlock

With Class II-IV rapid sections, kayaking the Gulkana Wild and Scenic River can be a rush.

Prepare to Go Wild

We asked some of our staff who often go into Alaska's backcountry and on Wild and Scenic River trips what tips they can share with you for a wild and wonderful experience. Here are some of the highlights:

Kim Mincer, a Visual Information Specialist who has gone on weeks-long packrafting trips on Alaska's North Slope, echoes Alaskan rafting expert Roman Dial that "People pack for their fears."

So when you pack, think about:

1. **Safety gear** – Include throw bag (rope/bag for retrieving); Personal Flotation Device with attached safety whistle and pocket (include safety items in pocket, such as knife, matches or lighter in waterproof bag); sunglasses with string to keep glasses on the head; small drybag (easily grabbed) with matches/lighter, snacks, maps, GPS, satellite phone or some communication system, lightweight first aid kit, sunscreen; bug spray/headnet; and, in the boat, – drinking water, water filter, iodine tablets, and bear spray.
2. **Food storage** – bear-proof bags or barrels of varying sizes (large for rafts, mini for packrafts)
3. **Cold temperatures** – Think layers, avoid cotton/denim. Synthetic puff jacket, good rain jacket and pants, fleece jacket, quick-drying pants, and smart wool or synthetic under-layers/long johns tops and bottoms; good waterproof hat, ball cap, ear band, liner and heavier gloves, and neck gator; dry suit with dry socks, neoprene booties, helmet (if bigger water), paddling gloves or poagies; several pairs of synthetic or wool socks; and, rubber boots.
4. **Watercraft** – have all the pieces (ropes, cords, carabineers, drybags, waterproof containers, plugs (spare, especially for packrafts), patch kit (if applicable), sprayskirt and cockpit tubes (packraft), bow/stern lines, and paddles (spare paddle with larger groups).
5. **General repair** – Duct tape, seam seal (sealing tent seams), sewing kit, and awl.

When camping, Kim recommends a good, strong tent that can withstand not only rain and winds, but snow. Check seams, tie lines, and stakes beforehand. Use a synthetic sleeping bag in case it gets wet and try it out in advance to be sure you fit comfortably. You may want to bring an inflatable ground pad, foam pad for extra insulation underneath sleeping bag, and sitting pad for under your feet and legs in your watercraft.

When packing food, consider whether you'll have to carry all your gear or have room on watercraft. Backpacking stoves are lightweight for boiling water (check working condition before you go), lightweight-compact dehydrated foods and drinks. Bear spray and fuel may not be allowed on your plane, so check with your pilot/airlines to figure out how to get what you need for your trip.

Fisheries biologist Jason Post adds: Always carry multiple methods to start a fire (lighter, waterproof matches, flint striker, road flare, cotton balls smeared with petroleum jelly in a film or equiv canister), pocket knife, medications in a waterproof pouch or plastic bag on your person. Keep a dry change of clothes in the waterproof dry bag. Securely attach gear to your watercraft with straps, rope lined through a D-ring or carry handle, or similar means.

Lastly, from Randy Goodwin, Recreation Planner, be sure any guide you hire for your trip has a current permit to operate with the agency who manages those lands.

Suggested Gear List

Come prepared for any kind of weather. **Avoid cotton; once wet, it stays wet.**

Clothing (in stuff sacks/dry bag)

- Rain Gear—jacket/pants, mid-weight
- Long sleeve wool/synthetic shirt with collar
- Wool or quick-dry nylon pants/shorts
- Synthetic long underwear, top/bottom
- Wool/synthetic blend or fleece socks, hat, and gloves
- Insulated jacket, sweater (pile, fleece, or wool)
- Boots (work/hiking), river footwear (sneakers, strapped sandals, rubber boots)
- Bandana

Camping and Recreational Equipment:

- Tent w/rain fly and footprint, large bug net tent
- Cook stove/pot/utensils/trash bags
- Water filter/canteen
- Bug spray/bug nets/bug-free clothing
- Sleeping bag and pad (warm, synthetic fill, rated 30° F or less)
- Backpack (for short jaunts)
- Large/small dry bags for river use
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, lip balm
- Personal hygiene items, first aid kit
- Pocketknife and multi-tool
- Fishing equip/State fishing license
- Small shovel
- Bear-proof food container/lockable cooler
- Bear spray/firearm
- Portable toilet system/Toilet paper
- Satellite phone/map/GPS

Wild & Buggy Alaska

Criag McCaa

Don't let the presence of insects discourage you from enjoying getting out on Alaska's rivers! The best defenses are insect repellent, mosquito nets, and long sleeves and pants. Most insects in Alaska are flies. Many have noses that can pierce skin and suck blood from animal and human hosts.

While Alaska's visitors worry about mosquitoes, these infamous bugs are simply an annoyance and according to the Alaska Section of the Epidemiology, mosquitoes have not been known to transmit disease-causing agents to humans as they do in many parts of the world. At worst, you may have an allergic reaction to a sting, so carry necessary precautions against a severe reaction.

Here are some of the biting and stinging insects you might encounter when on and around rivers in Alaska.

— Karen Laubenstein
Writer-Editor
Alaska State Office

Content adapted from the Anchorage Public Lands Information Centers safety information on insects.

Mosquito *(Culicidae)*

The mosquito is Alaska's unofficial state bird for a reason! Alaska has 35 species of mosquitoes. Only females bite to draw blood. No Alaska mosquitoes carry disease, but they leave itchy welts that may last for days. Mosquito populations peak around June. Repellent is quite effective against getting bitten. If bitten, apply a topical antihistamine or aloe vera.

Protection against Mosquitoes:

- Wear light-colored clothing.
- Use a headnet with a billed hat (to keep the netting away from your face).
- Find a windy place to escape most of them.
- Avoid exposure in the morning and evening.

No-see-ums *(Ceratopogonidae)*

These notorious nuisances to outdoor lovers usually live in semi-aquatic or mountain habitats. Their loud attack buzz is obnoxious. Similar to mosquitoes, only the females seek blood to lay eggs. Although no-see-ums are significantly smaller than mosquitoes, their bites are more painful and they can bite through light clothing. They also can fly through screens.

Protection against No-see-ums:

- Use insect repellent.
- Wear tightly woven outer garments that do not directly contact the body.
- Have extra fine mesh netting on your tent.

White Sox *(Simuliidae)*

White sox feed off mammalian blood and nectar for nourishment, but do not transmit diseases. Their nasty bites usually itch and swell for weeks! Their biting season starts in May and lasts until October. Their activity is localized, mostly around streams from which the adults emerge. Physically altering their habitats and conducting aerial insecticide sprays will alleviate most populations. White Sox are crawlers, and can crawl under clothing to bite the skin.

Protection against White Sox:

- Tuck your pants into your socks.
- Wear a light hooded parka with tight wrists and drawstring hood.

"Chosen [to be] Frozen"

Robben Taylor

Chosen Frozen Winter Camp Group.

The second week in April marked the 5th annual Chosen Frozen Winter Camp – a fun-filled youth program for local middle school students that teaches winter camping, recreation, and survival skills!

Partners BLM Glennallen Field Office, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment, and Copper River Native Association host Camp Chosen Frozen, along with BLM Campbell Creek Science Center staffers Brad Fidel and Brian Janson.

Students spent three days camping at the BLM Sourdough Campground (MP 147.5 Richardson Highway), sleeping, cooking, and storing their gear in large Arctic Oven tents. Night temperatures dropped, but their proper clothing, gear, and heaters kept campers toasty warm. The few who bravely stepped out of their tents into the cold night, witnessed some of winter's final Aurora Borealis light displays.

A popular activity was cross-country skiing. With a small trail loop close to their campsite, students new to skiing could practice their skills on a flat, relatively simple loop. Once students felt ready, the entire crew gathered up and took a short field trip on a mid-length ski route to the BLM Paxson Lake Campground, with some fun hills and turns for a new challenge.

Students also participated in instructor-led emergency fire starting lessons, ice fishing, winter meal prep, and even learned how to make "snow shoes" out of naturally found supplies that would be a good backup solution in case of emergency.

Musher Diane Elthsworth and her iKidarod team.

Another big hit was the 1st Copper Basin iKidarod! Long time musher and National Park Service employee, Diana Elthsworth taught students many of the phrases, tips, and tricks that real sled-dog mushers use in popular races such as the Copper Basin 300 and the Iditarod.

Students in two teams took turns running a short loop around the campground in a timed race. Although tiring, many students loved this activity and continued to run the loop to try and beat their times.

The last race of the day, run by musher Mikaela Dalton and her team, set the iKidarod "world record" at 1 minute and 52 seconds! Dalton said, "I've worked with this team for countless minutes in preparation for the 2018 iKidarod. It's been a dream of mine to set the world record and I couldn't have done it without these inspiring champions! We look forward to defending our title at next year's Chosen Frozen iKidarod!"

— Robben Taylor
Partnership & Outreach Coordinator
Glennallen Field Office

Robben Taylor

Cross-country skiing down a trail to Paxson Lake.

No Bugs, No Bears, and Plenty of Elbow Room!

This year, BLM Alaska Planning and Environmental Coordinator Laurie Thorpe didn't take a vacation to visit family and friends in her home state of Vermont. That's because she depleted her leave reserves, donating her time to several Alaska winter sports events.

Laurie Thorpe

Bikers depart the Yentna checkpoint to continue on the grueling Iditarod Trail Invitational.

Starting in January with the Copper Basin 300 sled dog race, Laurie volunteered at the Mendeltna Creek Lodge checkpoint. A devastating fire in December 2017 destroyed the lodge, so members of the community came together to set up a makeshift camp of heated tents to host volunteers and the mushers who made it to the last checkpoint before the finish line of "Alaska's toughest 300 miles." This year's race was dedicated to Laurie's good friend and a former volunteer, Joel Switzer, who lost his life last year in a tragic accident. Her eyes lit up talking about him and she said, "It was great being out there doing everything that Joel used to do and helping to keep his spirit alive."

February found Laurie at the first checkpoint for the grueling Iditarod Trail Invitational. Unlike the more familiar Iditarod sled dog race, the Invitational is human-powered. Competitors race across punishing terrain in extreme temperatures on foot, skis or fat tire bikes with minimal outside support. Before the race, Laurie used her "SnoMoGroomer," a snow mobile with a homemade grooming attachment to smooth the first 25 miles of trail leading to the Yentna checkpoint. She then spent a few days at the checkpoint recording names and times of the racers passing through, assisting with moral support, and helping to ensure the safety of competitors as they begin up to 30 days of a torturous winter journey to Nome.

Marching into March, Laurie traveled to Eagle Island, one of the more remote locations along the Iditarod National Historic Trail to support the 1049-mile Iditarod sled dog race. Using snowshoes, the five-person volunteer team stamped down an almost one-acre camp, then set up tents, propane heaters, generators, and an outdoor kitchen (a glorified blue tarp over a simple board table). As teams came through this checkpoint, Laurie was on hand with hot beverages, chocolates and drinks for the mushers. Two volunteer veterinarians were also there to examine and treat dogs. The few dogs that the vets determined were unable to continue were cared for by the checkpoint crew until they could be safely flown out by the Iditarod Air Force.

Laurie Thorpe

Laurie uses her homemade "SnoMoGroomer" to pack down 25 miles of trail leading to the Yentna checkpoint.

Winter in Alaska wouldn't be complete without a weekend of ice fishing. Laurie was out on the ice at Silver Lake for the seventh year, lending a hand with the BLM/Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment Family Ice Fishing Day. She helped set up banners and drill holes for families learning to ice fish. After setup, she enjoyed teaching kids to bait hooks, untangle fishing lines and handle their caught fish. Laurie especially delighted in seeing

the excitement of both children and parents pulling their first fish up through the ice holes.

When asked to pick a favorite winter sport volunteer opportunity, Laurie responded with "All of them!"

Combined with her passions for the outdoors and to have fun, winter volunteer opportunities fit her mantra of "No bugs, no bears, and plenty of elbow room!" As she relived her memories of her many seasons of volunteering in Alaska she shared that what she really likes most is meeting other volunteers and learning about their lives, adventures and reasons for helping out.

Now that winter is over, Laurie can take a break and rest up for next year. But until then, keep your eyes open ... you'll probably see her out at the annual Anchorage Weed Smackdown!!

— Lisa Gleason
Public Affairs Specialist
Alaska State Office

Laurie Thorpe

Kids pose with their catch at the BLM/Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment Family Ice Fishing Day.

Laurie Thorpe

Volunteers load a plane at Unalakleet with supplies to be flown to one of the remote checkpoints of the Iditarod National Historic Trail.

Focus on Alaska Trails!

BLM Alaska Recreation Planners Tom Bickauskas and Randy Goodwin joined forces to speak at the 2018 Alaska Statewide Trails Conference in Anchorage.

The annual statewide conference gives trail users and the public an opportunity to train and network with government agencies, trail builders and nonprofit organizations. More than 20 presenters shared information about trails and outdoor recreation with 122 participants this year. The event also recognized the 2018 celebrations marking the 50th anniversaries of both the National Trails System and Wild and Scenic Rivers Acts.

Randy presented on the BLM travel and transportation management process. He also shared updates on the Steese National Conservation Area and White Mountains National Recreation Area travel management plans, including upcoming public meetings for those plans, and information on the Alaska Federal Lands Long-Range Transportation Plan. Randy closed his session by imparting several interesting facts collected from the more than 3,000 surveys from visitors accessing public lands across Alaska. Most interesting to note among those visitor responses was that lack of cell phone coverage was reported as a larger safety issue than concerns about bad weather ... and bears!

"Seeing how other organizations approach solving trail issues was a great experience," said Randy. "However, I think the biggest benefit was the networking and engagement opportunity the event gave us."

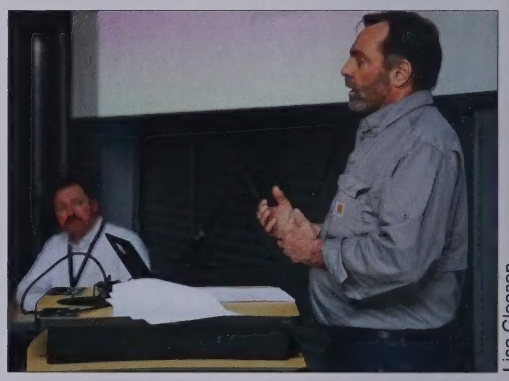
Later in the afternoon, Randy passed the presenter baton to Tom. Tom delivered a well-received presentation and demonstration of the BLM's georeferenced PDF maps. After introducing a broad spectrum of maps, he led participants in a discussion of their experiences using the many mobile apps currently available.

"Presenting at the Alaska Trails Conference gives us the chance to connect with the local community," shared Tom. "We learn a lot from the sessions we attend and enjoy the opportunity to share the BLM's multiple-use message with outdoor recreation users of our public lands," Tom said after the conference.

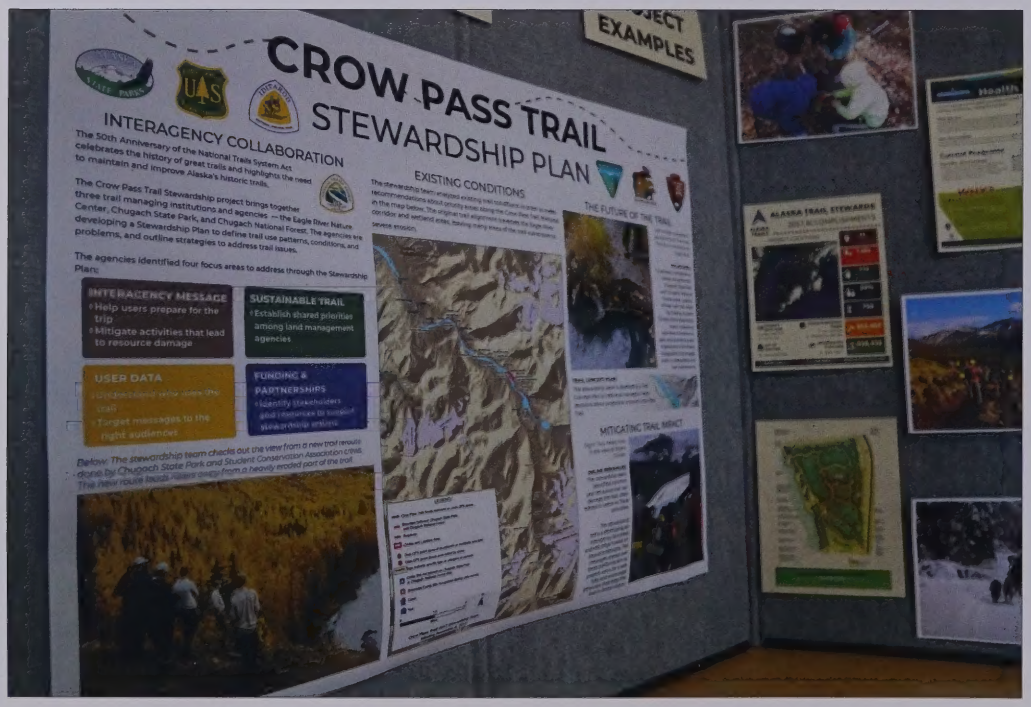
At the end of the day, all participants and trail advocates from around the state came together to view and discuss the many exhibits on display. Here too, there was a strong BLM Alaska presence, with both a display and within several other participant exhibits. BLM Alaska has contributed to this conference for over ten years.

— Lisa Gleason
Public Affairs Specialist
Alaska State Office

(Bottom Left) The Crow Pass Trail exhibit demonstrates interagency collaboration during the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the National Trails System Act. *(Below)* Randy Goodwin speaks to attendees about the BLM travel and transportation management process. *(Bottom Right)* Tom Bickauskas describes the BLM georeferenced PDF maps to attendees.



Lisa Gleason



Lisa Gleason

Lisa Gleason

Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game

What plants do caribou of the Fortymile Caribou Herd rely upon most? To learn more, and to find out whether availability of preferred foods might affect growth of the herd, BLM biologists and their colleagues at state, federal, and Canadian agencies have spent several years inspecting what caribou leave behind after a fine meal – their droppings. Analyses conducted to date indicate that lichens, followed by willows, are the most abundant summer forage items.

Now the researchers are introducing a new tool that will provide even more information on caribou diet as well as the animals' movements and behavior. Last summer researchers equipped one caribou with a special kind of radio-collar that included a small, forward-facing video camera. As the radio-tracking collar collected information on that animal's movements during the year, the camera took short videos at 20-minute intervals to give researchers a close-up view of what the caribou ate. Between the numerous shots of the caribou munching lichen, mushrooms, and plants, the 'caribou cam' videos also show the animal shaking its head to ward off insects, running on ridges, and interacting with other caribou in the herd.

This year, plans call for 17 adult female caribou to be fitted with these collars. Stay tuned for BLM's Caribou Cam Greatest Hits compilation video, now in production!

— Craig McCaa
Public Affairs Specialist
Fairbanks District Office

Cammie the Caribou

Cammie the Caribou

Cammie the Caribou

(Above) The lucky Cammie the caribou wearing a video camera collar. *(Right)* Stills from the video camera feed showing what kinds of vegetation Cammie the caribou ate.

Mad Scientists and Hands-On Learning

Eagle Academy Charter School students and teachers roamed their halls dressed like miniature Albert Einsteins in lab coats, nerdy coke bottle glasses, and flowing white hair. We had arrived on Mad Scientist Day!

We were there because the BLM Campbell Creek Science Center (CCSC) recently partnered with Eagle Academy Charter School to help kick off science week. Our goal was to engage students in hands-on explorations of natural resources management, and to get them excited about their science fair projects.

At student assemblies, CCSC science instructors Brad Fidel and Jen Christopherson introduced the kids to the BLM's and Science Center's missions.

Brad pointed out his and Jen's BLM uniforms, comparing them to the kids' lab coats. "Scientists wear all kinds of outfits to get science done," he explained. "Just like some scientists wear lab coats for their uniforms, Jen and I wear the BLM uniform. This is our lab coat. We are scientists, we both do science — and so can you!"

For a lesson about the salmon life cycle, Brad and Jen asked the students to take on the role of salmon. Imagine a large gym filled with 75 students and four teachers. Now, imagine a fast-moving river with bears and eagles fishing along the streambank and anglers fishing in the creek. The stream empties into the deep blue ocean, where fishing boats cast large nets and plentiful food swims around for salmon to eat.

Each student suddenly became a salmon fighting for survival! They learned through trial and error how challenging a salmon's life cycle can be. Shouts of excitement and frustration echoed off the gym walls, and the reverberating chants of "Go salmon, go salmon" echoed throughout the gym.

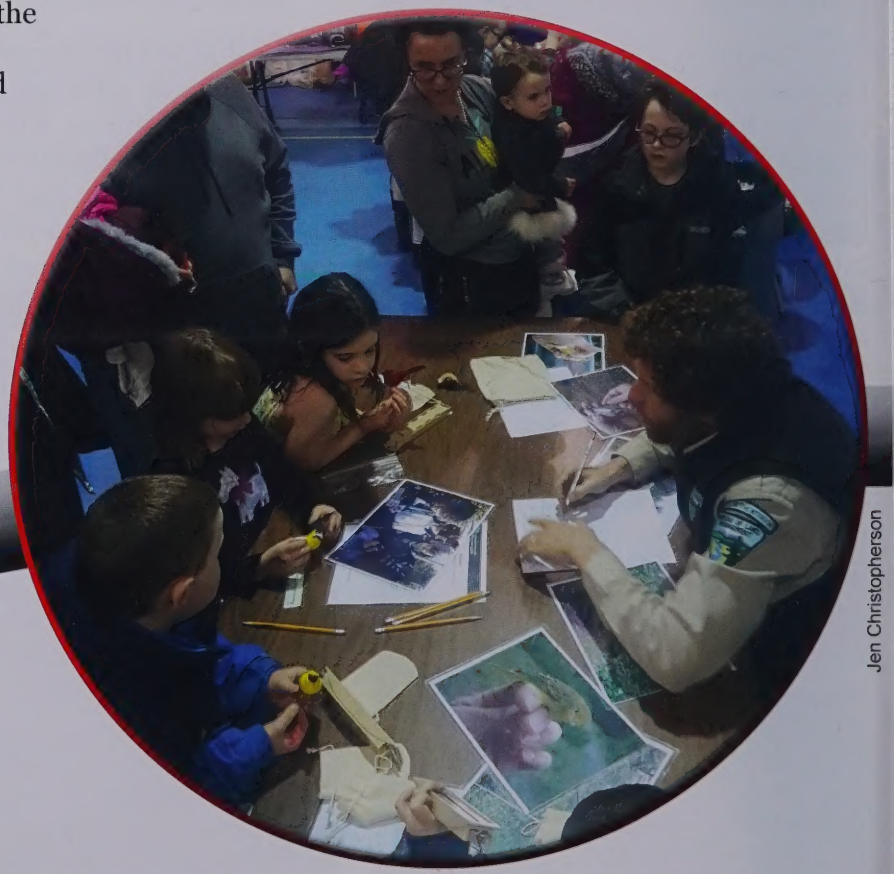
For science week kick-off night, 230 children and adults arrived in the gym and found a dozen stations designed by Science Center staff to discover how scientists learn from experiments. At one station, families examined the slow creep of glaciers portrayed by Gak® (a slime-like substance) oozing slowly down the glacially carved valleys, touched soft glacial silt, and even explored a preserved ice worm.

At another station, simulated birds "flew" into a mist net. Taking on the role of ornithologists, participants retrieved their fake bird from the mist net and carefully placed it in a canvas bag before weighing and measuring it.

The Build-A-Bug station inspired insect adaptations as students designed and created their own bug with eyes, ears, and defensive characteristics — including stingers, camouflage, and legs for walking. Enthused by the possibilities, children ventured to the fur table to

Jen Christopherson

Children and adults mesmerized by the creep of glaciers, the softness of glacial silt and the glacial ice worms.



Jen Christopherson

Budding ornithologists learn how to capture songbirds in a mist net, measure wingspan and weigh the birds using scientific tools.

brainstorm how animals adapt and survive in their unique environments.

Other stations showed how to use paleontological tools to discover dinosaur bones and how to use microscopes to view macroinvertebrates. All of these activities engaged students in a deeper understanding of how scientists design experiments to help understand the natural world.

"It was a phenomenal success!" shared fifth grade teacher and science fair coordinator Judy Pogue, "I was told over and over that students were engaged with the hands-on learning. Thank you [for]... helping our students get excited about science."

Nancy Patterson, CCSC manager, said "these experiences help learners investigate and apply natural resource and science principles used to manage public lands. In our programs, we know that a future public land manager may be sitting in the room. That gets us excited to go to work every day."

The Science Center looks forward to expanding opportunities like Science Night to bring even more hands-on learning opportunities to Alaska schools.

— Jen Christopherson
Science Instructor
BLM Campbell Creek Science Center

Jen Christopherson

Kathryn Logan, Eagle Academy Charter School

Kathryn Logan, Eagle Academy Charter School

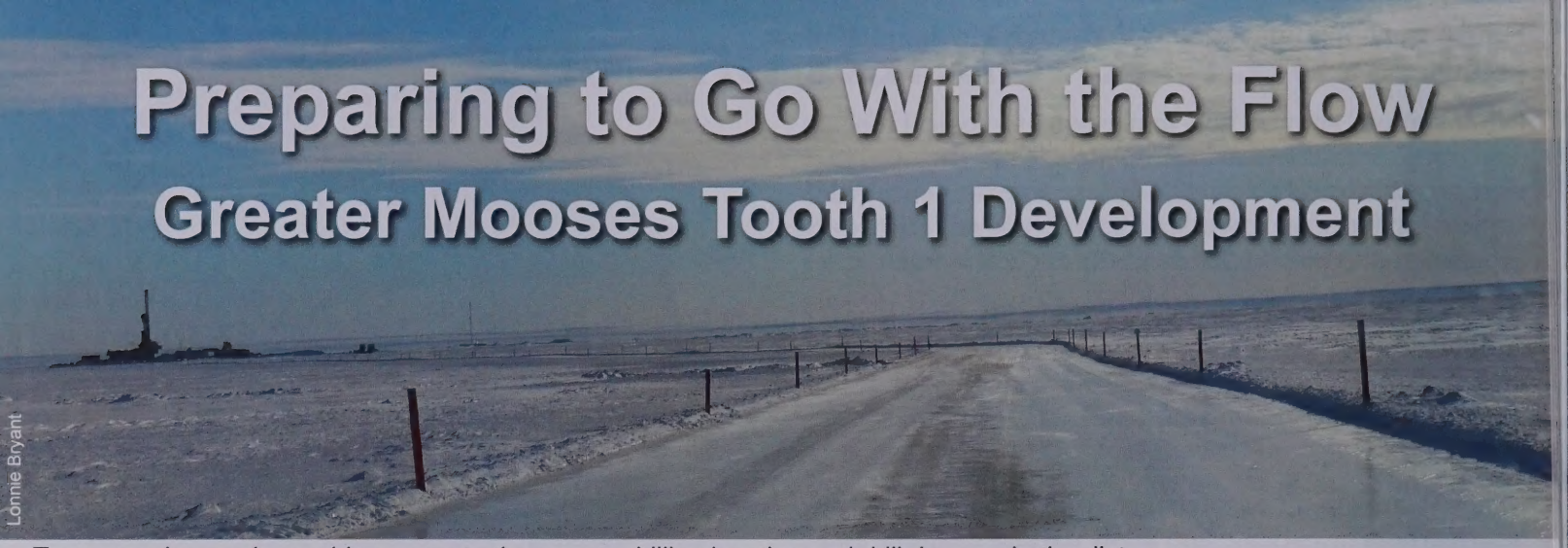
(Top) Allured by bear and wolf skulls, children create their own omnivore, carnivore or herbivore.

(Above) Digging for dinos deep in the sand, excited young paleontologists unearth rare finds.

(Left) Creating unique bugs with special adaptations such as stingers, wings and x-ray vision.

Preparing to Go With the Flow

Greater Mooses Tooth 1 Development



Lonnie Bryant

Temporary ice roads provide access to the remote drilling location and drill rig seen in the distance.

Appearing out of the vast expanse of white like a mirage, a thin black line snakes across the snow-covered tundra to a bright orange drill rig far in the distance. Scanning the landscape the entire scene seems to materialize out of nowhere, but the reality is that the small blip on the horizon is the culmination of years of planning, hard work, and dedication to development. For most of Alaska, the cold and dark winter is a time when construction projects are on hold, but in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) a major transformation is occurring at a place named the Greater Mooses Tooth 1. Construction on the project culminated in this past winter with the placement of the GMT1 to CD5 pipeline, a major effort supported by the use of temporary ice roads to provide a low-impact but sturdy base for the heavy cranes needed to lift the pipeline sections into place.

While oil and gas leasing, geophysical exploration, and exploratory drilling have been occurring regularly in the NPR-A since 1999, Greater Mooses Tooth 1 (or GMT1) is the first commercial development. Oil from GMT1 will be transported from the NPR-A to a processing facility then through an extensive network of pipelines until it ultimately reaches mile 0 of the Trans Alaska Pipeline System, joining a half-million other barrels of oil for the journey south to Valdez and eventually to market.

Originally discovered in 2001, oil from GMT1 well was thought to have been part of the Colville River Unit, famous on the North Slope for being the source of the Alpine Oil Field. But with additional exploration drilling in the area it was determined that the oil was coming from a different source, and GMT1 became the discovery well for the first unit designated in NPR-A—named the Greater Mooses Tooth by ConocoPhillips Alaska Inc. (CPAI). The determination that oil from the GMT1 was economically recoverable and, therefore, worth the time and effort to bring to production was made shortly after discovery, and the BLM approved construction of the well site in 2004 as part of the Alpine Satellite Developments Record of Decision. But unforeseen at-the-time issues and delays postponed construction.

Fast-forward to today and completion of a successful example of sustainable development: permanent infrastructure designed to ensure protections for natural resources and with respect for local residents and their cultural use of the lands surrounding GMT1.

Compared to many of the production pads or staging areas located on State leases to the east, GMT1 pad is small—only 11.2 acres—and the pipelines are tall—over 10 ft in height above the ground surface—in order to minimize impacts to caribou and their habitat. Up to 33 wells will eventually be housed on the 11.2 acre pad, providing peak production of 30,000 barrels of oil per day. The life

Donna Wixon

Construction is nearing completion on the GMT1 production pad, with gathering pipeline being connected to the first wells.

Eight miles of pipeline from GMT1 cross BLM and Kuukpik Corporation lands where they join existing infrastructure.

Pipelines originate from under the access road to begin the long trip back to the Alpine Central Processing Facility.

of the site is anticipated to be 30 years, but many sites on the North Slope have lived long beyond their projected timeframes thanks to advances in technology and new techniques in oil recovery.

Work will steadily continue at GMT1 throughout the summer, only possible due to the gravel road connecting the site to existing infrastructure. Buildings constructed on the pad will be finished, wells will be drilled, and well houses erected. CPAI anticipates performing the final tests needed to ensure the pipeline is ready to transport oil in early fall. And shortly thereafter a major milestone will be celebrated as first commercial production from federal lands begins, introducing a new era in the history of the NPR-A.

— Stacie McIntosh,
Acting Deputy Communications Director
Alaska State Office

Meet the Women Who Make it Possible

The NPR-A is managed by the BLM Arctic District Office, a small staff of 11 hard-working individuals who care about the land and people, and are committed to balancing sustainable development with resource protection. Permitting and compliance specialists Donna Wixon and Lonnie Bryant are responsible for all land use authorizations in NPR-A, such as overseeing the GMT1 development. This includes working with industry when they request a permit, conducting required on-site inspections and ensuring best management practices and other stipulations are followed.

Lonnie Bryant

Donna Wixon has worked for the Arctic District for 18 years, and serves as project manager, National Environmental Policy Act lead, and senior surface oil and gas inspector. One of only two staff with surface inspection responsibilities in the 22.8-million-acre NPR-A can be a challenge, especially with the heavy permitting workload. "What is really fulfilling is seeing all of the complicated moving parts of the past several years come together to create this oil and gas development where there was nothing," explained Donna. "I am so impressed with [ConocoPhillips] commitment to environmental safety and taking BLM's requirements seriously."

At the other end of the spectrum, **Lonnie Bryant** has worked for the Arctic District for 1 ½ years, and finds learning the job an enjoyable challenge given the unique management parameters of the reserve. "The best part of working in the NPR-A is being able to interact with the public at all levels of the permitting process," Lonnie says. "It is so rewarding to go out into the field and see what we [can] to accomplish working together."

Donna Wixon

At the end of the day, all of the hard work culminates in the office fulfilling the BLM goals of responsible energy development. And thanks to the dedication and oversight of people like Donna and Lonnie, the Arctic will remain a beautiful and unique place where industry and wildlife can coexist.

Alaska Dinosaurs!

BLM Alaska Hosts a DinoChat on Twitter

BLM Alaska @BLMAlaska · 2m
Paleontologists collect more precise information on the discover other conditions. #alaskadinosaur
Perot Museum @PerotMuseum · 2m
Yes, they're called birds. -TF #alaskadinosaur
BLM Alaska @BLMAlaska
Ephrata Elementary (WA) Q: Can dinosaurs still be alive today?
#alaskadinosaur
BLM Alaska @BLMAlaska · 3m
Ephrata Elementary (WA) Q: Can dinosaurs still be alive today?
#alaskadinosaur
and 2
paid Michael Cohen
StateDept and 1 more are

Kim Mincer

Stacie McIntosh, Acting Deputy Communications Director points to a BLM paleontology factoid she posted during the 2018 DinoChat. It was her first time participating in a Tweet Chat. Her role was to monitor the conversation as well as tweet 10 BLM Paleontology Program informational tweets.

It was an epoch event! Imagine if you could ask a leading paleontologist any questions you can think of about Alaska dinosaurs?

This happened during a two-hour BLM Alaska-sponsored Twitter DinoChat on May 3. The conversation included questions on the "biggest" and "toughest" Alaska dinosaurs, modern-day dinosaurs (birds), and even if crude oil results from dinosaur remains. Questions and factoids came together across different time zones, with several schools and individuals joining the conversation with the paleontologists.

So what did we learn? Dinosaurs were around for 160 million years, and their intelligence relates to their brain-to-body ratio. Some dinos were as intelligent as modern birds, the descendants of the dinosaurs. Alaska dinosaurs lived mostly during the Cretaceous period, as water covered much of Alaska during the Jurassic and Triassic. There has not been any dinosaur DNA or soft-tissue finds yet, so information comes from fossilized remains.

During the time of Alaska Dinosaurs, the Bering land bridge connected today's Alaska and Siberia, so some Alaska dinosaurs like the duck-billed dinosaur *Ugrunaaluk*

Tweet Cadre

Patrick Druckenmiller, Ph.D.
Earth Sciences Curator, Univ. of Alaska Fairbanks Museum of the North; Associate Professor, Dept. of Geosciences

Brent H. Breithaupt
BLM Regional Paleontologist

Anthony R. Fiorillo, Ph.D.
Vice President; Research & Collections Chief Curator; Perot Museum of Nature & Science, Dallas, TX.

kuukpikensis are related closely to Asian dinosaur species. Four Alaska dinosaurs now have formal names: *Ugrunaaluk kuukpikensis* (Ancient grazer, hadrosaur), *Pachyrhinosaurus perotorum* (ceretops), *Nanuqsaurus hoglandi* (polar bear lizard), and *Alaskacephale* – sauropods – could be over 100 feet long and 80 tons; in Alaska the biggest dinos were probably the hadrosaurs. *Ugrunaaluk* was up to 33 feet long, lived 66-70.6 million years ago. *Pachryhinosaurus* weighed up to 8,800 pounds, were up to 26 feet long, and lived 70-69 million years ago. *Nanuqsaurus* weighed up to 3,600 pounds, were about 23 feet long and as tall as 8.2 feet, and lived 66-70.6 million years ago. *Alaskacephales* were up to 7.9 feet long, weighed up to 500 pounds, lived 70.6-83.5 million years ago, and herbivores. There were no mammalian dinosaurs, like birds, they laid eggs. Some had feathers.

Plant fossils tell us that Alaska's climate was different during the time of Alaska dinosaurs – the land was mostly conifer forests with some broad-leafed trees, flowering plants, ferns and horsetails. Warmer than today with average temperatures around 45 degrees F., this is still cooler than scientists thought dinosaurs could comfortably live year-round and why these dinosaurs are "polar dinosaurs." Alaska also stretched farther north than today. The best evidence on Alaska's climate 70 million years ago, shows the environment was more like it is today between Calgary in Alberta, Canada, and Portland, Oregon. The winters had no daylight and there was probably snow.

The paleontologists explained they tell what a dinosaur looked like mostly from its bones. They have discovered thousands of bones of Alaska dinosaurs. They add muscles and sometimes find skin impressions to flesh them out, though often guess at colors. Paleontologists study a lot of anatomy to understand bones.

Finding dinosaur fossils is unique in Alaska, with challenges from bugs, bears, and weather – the remoteness requires larger budgets and transport by boats, helicopters, and planes. It is much tougher excavating fossils in Alaska than most places in the U.S.

A local news producer asked about origins of crude oil and dinosaurs. BLM geologists chimed into this conversation, that crude oil was created millions of years before the dinosaurs from tiny carbon-based life forms like algae and plankton that died off. Dr. Druckenmiller added that most oil is sourced from rocks older than the age of dinosaurs, but mostly by luck, the best dinosaur sites in Alaska are right by the best oil sites like Prudhoe Bay.

— Karen Laubenstein
Writer-Editor
Alaska State Office

Sample Tweets from DinoChat

Univ Alaska Museum @alaskamuseum · May 3
Hello Muldoon School! 🏫 Birds are descendants of carnivorous dinosaurs. Or in other words, dinosaurs are the ancestors of birds! **#alaskadinosaur**

BLM Alaska @BLMAlaska
Muldoon Elementary (AK) Q: What animals living today are ancestors of the dinosaurs? #alaskadinosaur

BLMWyoming @BLMWyoming · May 3
The BLM paleontology program works to preserve and protect paleontological resources for the benefit of current and future generations. **#alaskadinosaur**

Perot Museum @PerotMuseum · May 3
There's a lot of different kinds of evidence to suggest they overwintered and did not migrate long distances. -TF **#alaskadinosaur**

BLM Alaska @BLMAlaska
Polaris K-12 (AK) Q: Did polar dinosaurs migrate or stay put during the winter months? #alaskadinosaur

Perot Museum @PerotMuseum · May 3
We date the rocks, not the bones. And specifically, we look for volcanic ashes because they provide us the best chance to come up with a number in actual years. -TF **#alaskadinosaur**

Univ Alaska Museum @alaskamuseum
DINO DATING! We can't use the bones directly to tell how long ago they lived but we CAN tell how old the rocks are that they are buried in! Most Alaskan dinosaurs lived around 70 million years ago. #alaskadinosaur twitter.com/BLMAlaska/stat...

Univ Alaska Museum @alaskamuseum · May 3
DINO DATING! We can't use the bones directly to tell how long ago they lived but we CAN tell how old the rocks are that they are buried in! Most Alaskan dinosaurs lived around 70 million years ago. **#alaskadinosaur**

BLM Alaska @BLMAlaska
Polaris K-12 (AK) Q: What types of dating were used for the #Alaska dinosaur fossils? #alaskadinosaur

See the Full Conversation on Twitter or on the Alaska DinoChat Webpage.

frontiers flashes

Greater Mooses Tooth 2 Final Supplemental EIS

BLM Alaska is working on the final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) analyzing an application from ConocoPhillips Alaska, Inc., for oil and gas development in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A). This EIS supplements an earlier analysis of the project in the 2004 Alpine Satellite Development Plan. In the Draft Supplemental EIS, the BLM's preferred alternative is for the associated pipeline and access road to cross Kuukpik Corporation-owned lands and federally-managed lands within the NPR-A. The infrastructure would also connect to the Greater Mooses Tooth 1 development, located eight miles away. BLM is also in the process of analyzing comments received during April, when the BLM hosted public meetings in Anchorage, Fairbanks, and the North Slope communities of Utqiagvik, Atqasuk, Anaktufuk Pass, and Nuiqsut. You can find out more at the GMT2 Planning Project Page.

Coastal Plain Oil and Gas Leasing Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

BLM Alaska hosted public scoping meetings in Anchorage, Fairbanks, North Slope communities, and in Washington, D.C., to gather input fro the development of an EIS. As directed by Congress in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, the BLM is working toward an oil and gas lease sale in the Coastal Plain. This includes reaching out to partners and stakeholders, consulting with affected Alaska Native Tribes and Corporations, and laying the groundwork for an environmental analysis that is required before a lease sale can be held. The Coastal Plain on Alaska's North Slope is a major unexplored, but potentially productive, geologic onshore basin. BLM Alaska awarded EMPSi, a third-party contractor, the contract on April 18 to support development of the EIS. Watch the recorded Public Scoping meetings from Anchorage and Fairbanks online.

Find out more about the EIS at www.blm.gov/alaska/coastal-plain-eis.

Transportation Planning

BLM Recreation Planner Randy Goodwin and Civil Engineer Curtis Fortenbury are working with interagency partners to update the Alaska Collaborative Long-Range Transportation Plan. The updates are to the 2012 Alaska transportation plan to improve access to and through federal lands project, with partners including the BLM, National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, Federal Highways Administration, and Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities. The plan's update will include performance measures on system management, safety and mobility, the environment, climate change, partnerships, and risk management. http://www.akfedlandslrtp.org/

NPR-A Oil and Gas Lease Sale

BLM Alaska is working towards a 2018 oil and gas lease sale for the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. Each sale goes through a review to determine National Environmental Protection Act adequacy and that is currently in progress. After the Federal Register publishes a call for nominations for industry to nominate tracts for the sale, then the BLM will identify the sale date, the available tracts, and publish a Notice of Sale. Visit the Alaska Oil and Gas Lease Sale Page.

BLM Alaska Resource Advisory Council Members Sought

The statewide advisory council meets 2-3 times per year and consists of 15 members who provide advice and recommendations to the BLM on resource and land management issues. The council reflects a cross-section of Alaskans representing energy, tourism, and commercial recreation interests; environmental, archaeological or historic interests; and, elected officials, Alaska Native organizations, and the public at large. Members are appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. Currently we are seeking new Resource Advisory Council members. To apply, fill out a RAC application and contact Lesli Ellis-Wouters at lellis@blm.gov or (907) 271-4418. For more general information and to read the meeting notes visit the Alaska Resource Advisory Council webpage.

The Council plans to meet Aug. 15 and 16 to receive planning and project updates, hear reports from the Council's subcommittees on placer mining, recreation, trapper cabins, and Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act issues at this meeting in Anchorage. There will be discussions on the BLM's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) streamlining and prioritization process, and how the BLM works with other federal and state agencies, tribes, and interested parties in these processes. The three BLM Alaska District offices and the Alaska Fire Service will also present their activities.

10th Copper River Stewardship Program

Robben Taylor

The Glennallen Field Office will partner to host the 10th annual Copper River Stewardship Program July 20-30. The ten-day exploration program for high school students of the Copper River watershed, brings youth from different backgrounds together to explore ways of sustaining the watershed's health and diversity. The program involves a variety of outdoor experiential learning opportunities such as hiking, rafting, and canoeing throughout the watershed. Participants learn about natural resource management careers; federal and state subsistence; recreational and commercial fisheries management; oil pipeline management and oversight; cooperative watershed management; as well as the area's tourism industry. In addition to the BLM Glennallen Field Office, partners include the Wrangell Institute for Science and Environment, Copper River Watershed Project, Prince William Sound Science Center, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and local villages and Native corporations.

News from around the State

Bear Tooth Unit-Willow Oil & Gas Project

The Willow Master Development Plan (MDP) within the Bear Tooth Unit of the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska (NPR-A) proposes to construct drill sites, access and infield roads, pipelines, a processing plant, and other facilities to support production and transport of petroleum from federal oil and gas leases in the NPR-A, while protecting surface resources. The Willow MDP will continue development of ConocoPhillips' leases in the NPR-A. The BLM-AK Project Lead is Ferris Couture. Cooperating agencies include: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Alaska Department of Natural Resources; Bureau of Ocean Energy Management; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; U.S. Coast Guard; U.S. Department of Transportation; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; North Slope Borough; Inupiat Community of Arctic Slope; and Native Village of Nuiqsut.

We Need Your Help!

The BLM's Office of Law Enforcement is asking for the public's help in locating a stolen mammoth tusk.

Early on the morning of Thursday, March 8, 2018, the BLM Campbell Creek Science Center was burglarized and a large mammoth tusk that was on display was stolen.

The tusk is approximately 5 1/2 inches in length, 8 inches in diameter on the large end and 6 inches in diameter on the smaller end. It is curved, mottled dark and light brown in color, and weighs approximately 100 pounds.

Generations of schoolchildren and visitors have benefited from the tusk as an educational and interpretive exhibit at the science center.

The BLM is asking for assistance locating the stolen tusk so that it may be returned to its place at the science center as a piece of history that all may enjoy. We are offering a reward of up to $500 for information leading to the recovery of the stolen tusk.

Please call the BLM at 907-271-6622 or email blmalaska@blm.gov if you have information that could help locate the missing tusk.

TWO Great Opportunities to Show Off Your Photography Skills

Lisa Gleason

2019 SPORTSMAN SHOW Display Photo Contest:

Send us your photos of recreating on Alaska's BLM-managed public lands for the opportunity of having your image highlighted on next year's Great Alaska Sportsman Show display!

We are looking for **ten** winning photos of a person recreating on BLM-managed land in each of the following ten categories: OHV riding, skiing, river floating, hiking, bicycling, camping, subsistence, gold panning, dog mushing, and fishing. The winning photos will be highlighted on the 2019 Great Alaskan Sportsman Show display at the BLM booth.

BLM Alaska's YEAR OF THE DOG Photo Contest:

According to the Chinese zodiac, 2018 is the Year of the Dog. To celebrate, BLM Alaska is seeking your favorite photos of you and your furry friends enjoying your public lands.

With majestic wildlife and seemingly endless vistas, BLM-managed public lands in Alaska provide the perfect opportunity to take your four-legged companions out for some fresh air and new adventures. Opportunities abound on much of the over 70 million acres of Alaska's BLM-managed public lands with activities such as fishing, four-wheeling, sightseeing, river floating, hiking, bicycling, camping, and hunting, to name a few. Send us your photos of you and your canine best friend recreating on Alaska's BLM-managed public land for the chance of having your image highlighted on all of our social media channels and on the front page of our digital magazine - *frontiers*!

We are looking for **four** winning photos – three people's choice awards and one BLM staff favorite.

So yes, there are TWO great photo contest opportunities!

Enter through Oct. 31, 2018 for both photo contests

- Year of the Dog Photo Contest rules and guidelines
- Sportsman Show Display Photo Contest

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